

P A N D E M I C

FLU



1918

1957

1968

20??

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

www.ohiopandemicflu.gov

Facts About a Flu Pandemic

An influenza pandemic occurs when a new flu virus emerges to which the human population has little or no immunity, and causes a global outbreak of disease as it spreads from person to person.

Bird flu is a disease that infects birds and occasionally humans.

Scientists are concerned the H5N1 virus infecting birds and occasionally people may mutate or change its genetic makeup to begin passing easily from human to human and possibly spark a pandemic.

Flu pandemics have occurred periodically throughout history and will happen again. There were only three pandemics in the last century in 1918, 1957 and 1968.

Pandemics are unpredictable and it's hard to know when one will occur, what type of pandemic it will be and how severe it will be. A flu pandemic could cause major disruptions in some parts of daily life and limit the availability of some services (e.g. health care services). Pandemic flu isn't bird flu. However, bird flu could cause the next pandemic, or a different virus may emerge.

Large gatherings might be discouraged to control the spread of the disease (schools and businesses may close, sporting events could be cancelled and transportation could be limited). Additionally, hospitals could be overloaded. Doctors and nurses may become sick. There also may be more people with the flu than hospitals can treat. In this case, some people would need to be cared for in their homes or other places.

There are things you can do now to prepare. Take time to understand your household needs; and take action to help lessen the impact of a flu pandemic on you and your family.

1918

What You Can Do About a Potential Flu Pandemic

When preparing for a possible emergency situation such a flu pandemic, consider what you may need if asked to remain in your home for several days to protect yourself and others from flu virus.

You can prepare now by keeping your cupboards full of extra items. Experts recommend you have at least a one-week supply of food, water and medicines. They may be purchased over time to limit the financial impact and prevent store shortages.

Suggested items include:

- Drinking water.
- Non-perishable items such as ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables.
- Medical/first-aid and hygiene items including medicines for fever such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen or aspirin.
- Emergency supplies such as a portable, battery-powered radio and any medically prescribed equipment.



1957

1968

20??



1918 1957 1968

20???

IT WILL HAPPEN AGAIN.
Prepare NOW for a flu pandemic.

www.ohiopandemicflu.gov



Brought to you by the Ohio Department of Health and your local health department.

Total Copies Printed 510,000 Unit Cost \$0.66 Publication Date 09/08

Healthy Habits

To date, bird flu viruses have not achieved the ability to pass easily from person to person. If the H5N1 virus begins to spread easily between people, it is a good idea to practice proper respiratory etiquette to avoid possible infection.

Make respiratory etiquette a habit now.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue away after you use it.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs often spread this way.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze or use the restroom and before eating. If you are not near soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Stay away as much as you can from people who are sick.
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school.

Preventive measures and good health habits can help keep your body healthy and fight off the flu.

- Eat a balanced diet that includes plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole grain products.
- Drink plenty of water and go easy on salt, sugar, alcohol and saturated fat.
- Exercise on a regular basis. Thirty minutes or more of physical activity most days of the week can help boost your immunity.
- Get plenty of rest. Sleep is shown to help your body's ability to fight off illness.

Important telephone numbers:

School Nurse _____

Urgent Care Clinic _____

Hospital 1 _____

Hospital 2 _____

Doctor 1 _____

Doctor 2 _____

Paramedics _____ or 9-1-1

Local Health Department _____

Health Insurance _____

Veterinarian _____

Red Cross _____

Resources

To see what the State of Ohio is doing to prepare for a pandemic, visit www.ohiopandemicflu.gov. This inter-agency Web site includes many resources for Ohioans:

- Planning resources for Ohio's families, schools, businesses, communities, health care providers and local governments.
- Fact sheets, questions and answers, multi-media files, brochures and more.
- Quarterly planning newsletters – subscribe here.

The World Health Organization Web site www.who.int/en/ provides updates on avian influenza around the world in several languages. Other resources include:

- Advice for travelers.
- Frequently asked questions.
- Industry guidelines.